NUMB. XCIX.

The GUARDIAN.

Juſtum, & tenacem propoſiti virum
Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
Non vultus inſtantis tyranni
Mente quatit ſolidâ, neque Auſter
Dux inquieti turbidus Adriæ,
Nec fulminantis magna Jovis manus:
Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ. Hor.

Saturday, July 4. 1713.

THERE is no Virtue ſo truly great and godlike as Juſtice. Moſt of the other Virtues are the Virtues of Created Beings, or accommodated to our Nature as we are Men. Juſtice is that which is practiſed by God himſelf, and to be practiſed in its Perfection by none but him. Omniſcience and Omnipotence are requiſite for the full Exertion of it. The one, to diſcover every degree of Uprightneſs or Iniquity in Thoughts, Words and Actions. The other, to meaſure out and inflict ſuitable Rewards and Puniſhments.

As to be perfectly Juſt is an Attribute in the Divine Nature, to be ſo to the utmoſt of our Abilities is the Glory of a Man. Such an one who has the Publick Adminiſtration in his Hands, acts like the Repreſentative of his Maker, in recompencing the Virtuous, and puniſhing the Offender. By the extirpating of a Criminal he averts the Judgments of Heaven, when ready to fall upon an impious People; or, as my Friend *Cato* expreſſes it much better in a Sentiment conformable to his Character,

When by juſt Vengeance impious Mortals periſh,
The Gods behold their Puniſhment with Pleaſure,
And lay th' uplifted Thunder-bolt aſide.

When a Nation once loſes its Regard to Juſtice; when they do not look upon it as ſomething venerable, holy and inviolable; when any of them dare preſume to leſſen, affront or terrifie thoſe who have the Diſtribution of it in their Hands; when a Judge is capable of being influenced by any thing but Law, or a Cauſe may be recommended by any thing that is Foreign to its own Merits, we may venture to Pronounce that ſuch a Nation is haſtening to its Ruin.

For this Reaſon the beſt Law that has ever paſt in our Days is, that which continues our Judges in their Poſts during their good Behaviour, without leaving them to the Mercy of ſuch who in ill Times might by an undue Influence over them, trouble and pervert the Courſe of Juſtice. I dare ſay the extraordinary Perſon who is now poſted in the *Chief* Station of the Law, would have been the ſame had that Act never paſt; but it is a great Satisfaction to all Honeſt Men, that while we ſee the greateſt Ornament of the Profeſſion in its higheſt Poſt, we are ſure he cannot hurt himſelf by that aſſiduous, regular and impartial Adminiſtration of Juſtice, for which he is ſo Univerſally celebrated by the whole Kingdom. Such Men are to be reckoned among the greateſt National Bleſſings, and ſhould have that Honour paid them whilſt they are yet living, which will not fail to crown their Memory when dead.

I always rejoice when I ſee a Tribunal filled with a Man of an upright and inflexible Temper, who in the

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